

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN PROG MX OAS

SUBJECT: ELECTION OF ALEJANDRO ORFILA CRITICIZED IN MEXICO

SUMMARY: TWO IMPORTANT MEXICO CITY DAILIES, INFLUENTIAL-NATIONALISTIC EXCELSIOR AND GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED EL SOL, STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE ELECTION OF ARGENTINE AMB ALEJANDRO ORFILA TO POST OF OAS SECRETARY GENERAL. IN A PRESS INTERVIEW MAY 17, FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA TOOK A CONCILIATORY STANCE ON THE ELECTION. END SUMMARY.

1. EL SOL LAUNCHED ITS ATTACK ON ORFILA'S ELECTION ON MAY 18, UNDER THE BANNER HEADLINE "US DIVIDES AND IMPOSES ORFILA". SOL'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON, GERARDO BOLANOS, CHARACTERIZED THE ELECTION AS HAVING BEEN MANIPULATED BY THE US IN ORDER TO PUT A MALLEABLE OR PERHAPS EVEN SERVILE MAN IN THE SECRETARY GENERAL POST. TO PROVE HIS POINT, BOLANOS REPORTS: "ORFILA SAID THAT AS A 'PRAGMATIC' MAN, HE WOULD TRY TO SEE THAT THE OAS RETURN TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH SUPPORT IT FINANCIALLY THE VALUE OF EACH DOLLAR INVESTED." THE ACCOUNT UXTAPOSES THIS WITH THE FACT THAT THE US CONTRIBUTES 60 PERCENT OF THE OAS'S BUDGET LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT ORFILA HAS PUBLICLY PROMISED TO MARCH TO WASHINGTON'S ORDERS.

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2. IN ITS LEAD EDITORIAL ON MAY 19, EL SOL WENT EVEN

FURTHER. IT REPEATED THAT ABOVE STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO ORFILA AND CALLS THIS A "PROMISE TO BECOME THE ZEALOUS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NATION WHICH SUPPLIES 60 PERCENT OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BUDGET." THIS "DISFIGURATION (OF THE OAS) AT THE ALTAR OF IMPERIALIST INTERESTS," EL SOL WARNS, WILL PROVOKE A CRISIS IN THE HEMISPHERIC BODY.

3. EXCELSIOR'S SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON, RAUL TORRES BARRON WAS ALSO HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE ELECTION IN HIS REPORT PUBLISHED MAY 18. HE SET THE TONE OF HIS PIECE BY BEGINNING WITH THE FOLLOWING QUOTE OF GOMEZ BERGES: "THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION IS A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE LARGE AND POWERFUL CONTINUE TO IMPOSE THEIR WILLS; IT APPEARS THAT THE EQUALITY OF STATES CONTINUES TO BE PURELY FICTION." IN ADDITION, TORRES REPORTED THAT SOME UNNAMED FOREIGN MINISTERS OFFICIALLY SAID THAT THE US VIOLATED THE RULES OF THE GAME BECAUSE IT DID NOT REMAIN NEUTRAL OR JOIN WITH GOMEZ BERGES' EARLY MAJORITY.

4. EXCELSIOR HAD PREVIOUSLY ATTACKED THE US IN AN EDITORIAL MAY 16 FOR BREAKING THE RULES AND PUBLICLY SUPPORTING ORFILA ALTHOUGH GOMEZ BERGES HAD RECEIVED MORE VOTES IN FIRST THREE BALLOTS. THE EDITORIAL STRESSED GOMEZ BERGES WAS SUPPORTED BY SMALL NATIONS OF CARIBBEEAN AND THAT ORFILA BY THE USG (NEGLECTING ALL MENTION OF OTHER SUPPORT), THEREBY LEAVING THE IMPRESSION THAT ORFILA WAS THE US CANDIDATE.

5. IN A CONVERSATION WITH AMB JOVA MAY 17, THE AMBASSADORS OF COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ALL DECRIED THE ELECTION OF ORFILA AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE WAY THE US MANIPULATES OAS ELECTIONS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT LIKE GALO PLAZA, ORFILA IS AMERICANIZED ("AGRINGADO"). BOTH HAVE LIVED IN THE US FOR MANY YEARS, WERE EDUCATED IN US UNIVERSITIES, AND ARE WEALTHY. AMB JOVA RESPONDED TO THE CRITICISM OF THE US BY STRESSING THAT WE HAD REMAINED NEUTRAL AND SILENT THROUGH 3 LONG BALLOTS, AND HAD THEN MERELY JOINED THE SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES ALREADY FAVORING ORFILA.

6. OTHER PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE OAS ELECTION WERE BASED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS AND WERE FACTUAL AND NEUTRAL.

7. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN EXCELSIOR MAY 19, FONSEC RABASA IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "THERE IS NO REASON TO LEAVE THE DIVISIVE SCARS (OF THE ELECTION)". HE REPORTEDLY ALSO OBSERVED THAT BECAUSE ORFILA WON AFTER THE US ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT FOR HIM, HE WILL CERTAINLY LABOR FOR UNITY IN THE OAS. JOVA

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